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Mobile Beat

THE MOBILE ENTERTAINER'S MAGAZINE • WWW.MOBILEBEAT.COM

ISSUE 175 OCTOBER 2016

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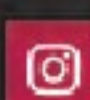
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The debate goes back and forth, but at least it's usually not as combative as a modern political campaign: On one side, those who insist that DJs should concentrate on playing music; on the other, those who embrace the expansion of their services to include add-ons like photo booths, trivia games, uplighting and more.

Of course, the extras could overwhelm the DJ's core business if he or she lets them. But I think most DJ companies have a good idea of how to best fit these "expansions" into their offerings.

Inside, Mobile Beat Publisher Ryan Burger provides a concise overview of available game show options, while Photo Booth Expo producer Rob Savickis provides some perspective on this increasingly essential add-on. Plus, a lot more great info awaits!

~ Dan Walsh, Editor-in-Chief

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The Photo Booth Phenomenon

THE POPULAR ADD-ON IN PROPER PERSPECTIVE

By Rob Savickis

The last 10 years have been an exciting time for the photo booth industry. In 2006 photo booths at weddings were a novelty, if not a rarity. Some people had them, but one did not expect to go to a wedding as a guest and walk away with a photo booth strip.

Fast-forward to 2016 and by some reports, the majority of weddings now have photo booths. Photo booths are now an essential part of the whole wedding experience. Without them it would feel like something is missing.

Some people say that photo booths are a fad, but that could not be farther from the truth. The continuing growth of the photo booth phenomena can be traced to four main factors that transformed the industry:

1) Advancements in computer, software and printer technologies that for the first time allowed photo booths to be transported easily from event to event, rather than being permanently stationed in one location.

2) The explosion of social media in which self portraits and photographic expressions in general have become an essential part of our society.

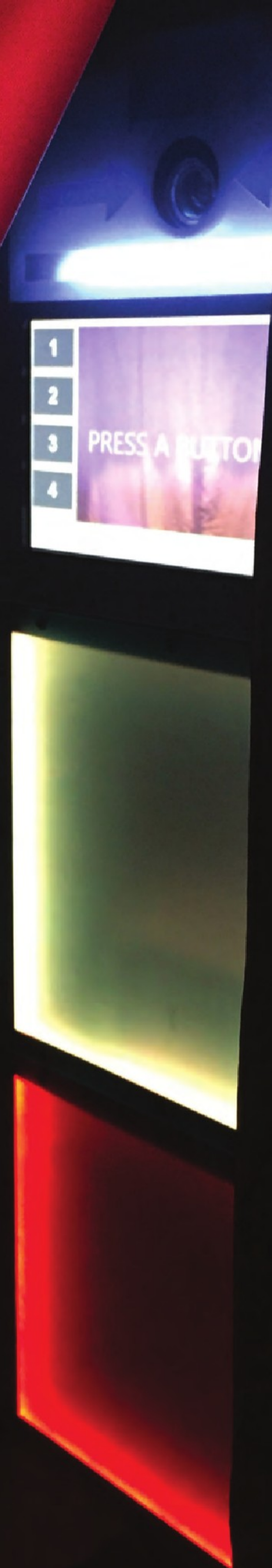
3) The 2008-2009 recession which forced both disc jockeys and photographers, as well as other wedding and event professionals, to find new revenue streams.

4) The evolution of photo booths as a form of entertainment. In the distant past people went into photo booths to get their pictures taken. Today, the most successful companies are those that can entertain people and, most importantly, make them laugh, which comes out in the final product.

BOOTHS HAVE BEEN AROUND

To truly understand the growth in the photo booth industry one has to understand some basics of its history. Even before the recent boom, photo booths had become a part of American if not world culture as much as baseball, hot dogs and apple pie.

Cameras themselves became a practicality in the middle of the 19th century. By the early 1900s people would go to studios where they would have to sit without moving for several seconds in order to get their portraits made. These earliest photographic devices can be seen in many photography museums around the world.





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Even before the recent boom, photo booths had become a part of American if not world culture as much as baseball, hot dogs and apple pie.



Crowds at Photobooth Expo (PBX) in Las Vegas, March 2016.

While some might consider these to have some characteristics of photo booths, it was the combining of vending machine features with these portrait studios that most people consider to be the birth of the term “photo booth.”

The first huge success amongst photo booth operators in America is credited to Anatol Marco Josepho (1894-1980) who created a machine called the Photomaton, which produced a strip of eight photographic portraits in eight minutes for 25 cents.

When he opened up the machine to the public in New York City at 1659 Broadway in the summer of 1925, it was an instant success. According to an article published in *Time Magazine* on April 4, 1927, 280,000 people patronized the first Photomaton location in its first six months. In 1927 Josepho sold his machines and his patent to a group of investors for one million dollars (a lot of money back then—LOL!) plus royalties...and the rest is history.

It was not long before imitators started appearing and photo booths were popping up on what seemed like every corner. Even World War II helped the popularity of photo booths as soldiers were using the photo booths to send pictures of themselves to their loved ones while in return their loved ones sent pictures back.



Rob Savickis has almost 30 years experience in the event industry, originally as a disc jockey. He first became involved with photo booths about five years ago. Currently Rob runs “Green Screen Photo Booths” in his hometown of Niagara Falls, Ontario, Canada. He also produces the Photo Booth Expo (www.photoboothexpo.com) in Las Vegas, which will present its third installment in March 2017.

According to some estimates, by the early 1950s there were more than 30,000 photo booths in the United States. One of the largest players was the Auto-Photo Company which was able to cut deals with Woolworths and Kresge, two of the largest retail giants of the time, for rental space. Known as Model 9 and Model 11 machines, the 700-pound photo booths were cranked out by the thousands.

With the introduction of Polaroid technology in the ‘60s and ‘70s, the “chemical” photo booths, as they were and are still known, did suffer a significant decline, until photo booth technology caught up.

Photo booth software started becoming popular in the late 1990s and early 2000s and dye sublimation color printing was at the same time becoming both affordable and transportable. Both of these developments spurred the resurgence of the photo booth industry. For the first time it was practical to bring a photo booth from location to location rather than just having it in one place.

Rather than hurting the business, the 2008-2009 recession actually helped photo booths, as event professionals such as disc jockeys and photographers among others, were looking for new revenue streams.

Today, the photo booth industry as a whole is stronger than ever. More than 40 manufacturers in the United States, and many more worldwide, offer a variety of both stationary and portable photo booths for all sorts of applications. Many offshoots are also now available, such as video booths, graffiti walls, green screen, and the list goes on and on. While it is impossible to predict the exact course that photo booths will take in the future, one thing is for certain, the journey will be exciting. **MB**

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Have Fun While Working for Yourself and Your Family

By Rob Johnson

I am writing this article from the *Carnival Conquest*. My wife and I sail today for the next eight days. I have had a lot of conversations with my friends who have “real jobs” lately about holiday travel, vacation, days off, kids off from school, and all of the FUN things associated with the next few months. There is a common theme: Many of my friends are stressed out. They don’t have enough time off. They can’t visit all their family. They don’t have anyone to watch their kids during break. They don’t have enough money for the extra things that come with the holidays. No bonus this year and times are tough. You get the point.

As we boarded the cruise ship today my wife said, “We sure are lucky.” I quickly reminded her that “it isn’t luck.” She was a bit taken aback and asked what I meant. I told her we have provided our own “luck.” We took the chance 16 years ago to go into business for ourselves. WE took the risk. We made the investment in ourselves. We get to enjoy the benefits of that hard work.

Working as entertainers is FUN! Being self-employed is FUN! We get paid to have FUN! I set my own hours. If I want to work really hard I will likely make a lot more money. If I want to take a couple of weeks off in the summer and motorhome around with my family, I will make less money but

I will still have FUN!

How many people do you know who have fun at their jobs? I don’t think most people do. I don’t have any idea how they do it. I can’t imagine punching a clock and working hard all day to make someone else lots of money. That doesn’t sound fun to me. I didn’t say *nobody* has fun, I said I don’t think MOST people do. I am sure you do—and that is awesome.

I know what you are thinking. Not every part of the entertainment business is fun. Some of the people we deal with are a big pain in the ass. I get that. Still, it doesn’t stop me from having fun with my audience and clients.

What does this have to do with midweek money? Everything! Without midweek money I would likely still be working my “real job” advocating for the rights of people with Developmental Disabilities and their families. It was a great job. I did some good things. I was very proud of what I was doing. But it wasn’t fun at all. It was long hours, average pay, great benefits and very rewarding. When I quit to transform a “hobby” into a full-time career it was very scary. It was also the best business decision I ever made.

It took a while to figure out which entertainment options were for me. The game show aspect of my business was a no-brainer: low investment with huge



potential for income. (Contact me at DigiGames to find out how you can do the same.) The best part is that it’s—you guessed it—FUN! Every show is different. I ask many of the same questions but the fun comes from the participants. People love to compete. People love to show how smart they are. But the audience loves it MOST when someone that THINKS they are smart and PROVES they are not.

Being a comedy stage hypnotist is also awesome. I get paid a lot of money to have fun with people for 60 to 90 minutes at a time. Photo booths are great. I get to send it out with someone and make money while I am not even there. That is A LOT of fun!

There are all kinds of careers, jobs and ways for you to support yourself and your family. If you are currently happy with where you’re at, I truly congratulate you for finding the right fit for you. It is an awesome feeling. If you are looking to make a change and want to know how you can take your entertainment business to the next level, find someone who is doing it and network with them. Go to Mobile Beat Las Vegas or any other conference that you can attend to meet the right people. I am not saying it is always easy being a self-employed entertainer but I am saying it can be very lucrative...and a lot of FUN! **MB**

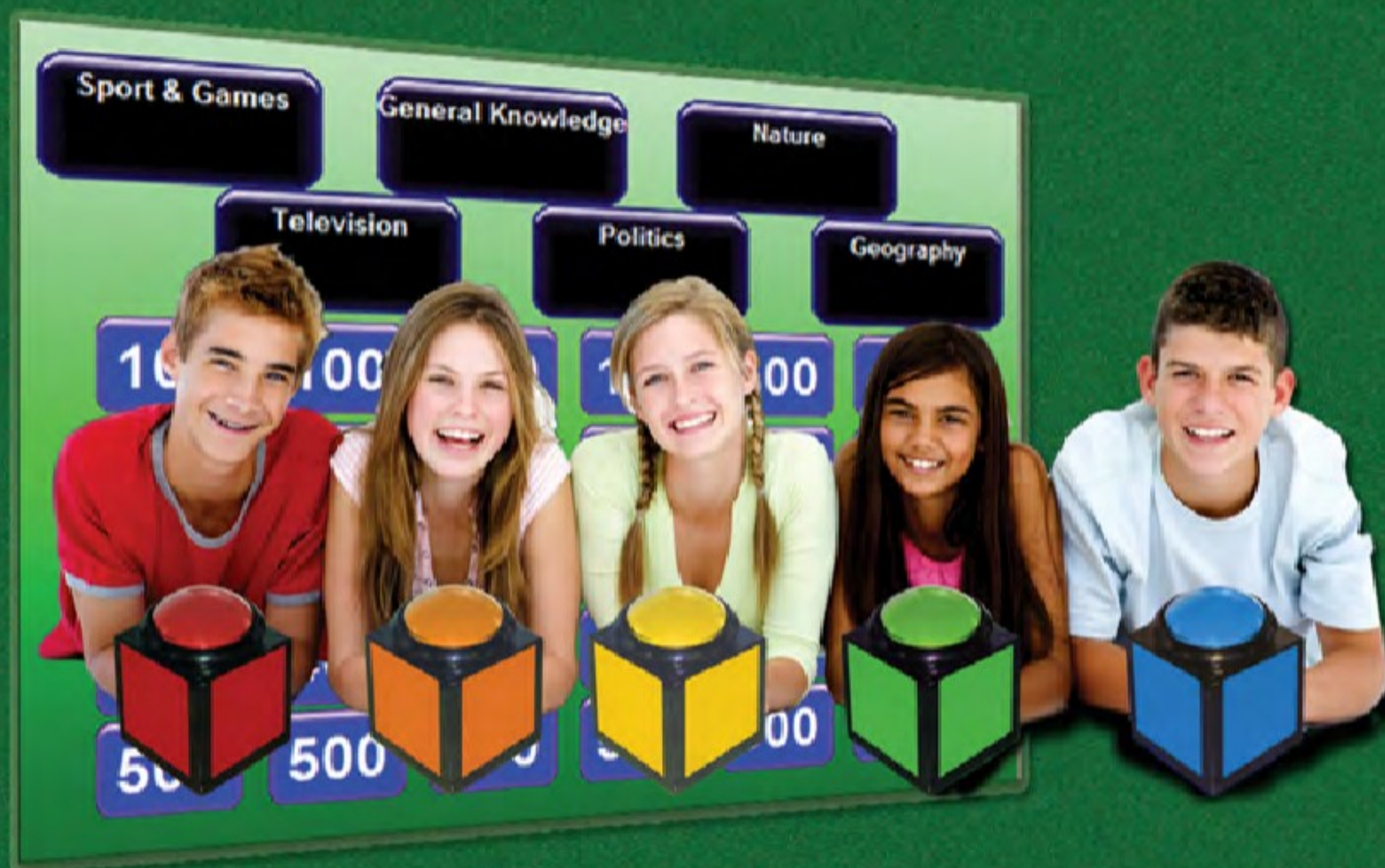


Rob Johnson has hosted trivia parties and game shows for over 17 years. He is the current spokesperson for DigiGames and uses their equipment exclusively. He has performed throughout the United States, Europe and the Caribbean. Rob is the owner of The Music Man, Inc. and performs comedy stage hypnosis shows as The Hypno Man. He has also presented his “Midweek Money” seminar at many conferences and conventions, including Mobile Beat, WEDJ, Wedding MBA and various ADJA events. If you would like Rob to speak at your local event or demonstrate DigiGames gear to your group, contact him at 701-710-1657 or rob@digigames.com. Don’t hesitate to contact Rob if you are looking for ways to increase your bottom line and put more money in your pocket.

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Game Show Lowdown

A QUICK RUNDOWN OF ALL THE GREAT OPTIONS FOR ADDING GAMES AND TRIVIA TO YOUR BUSINESS

By Ryan Burger

Back in 1999, I got my first game show system from Game Show Mania. It was amazing: I could be a game show host like all my favorites on TV, like Wink Martindale, Alex Trebek, Pat Sajak, Chuck Woolery and more. I had grown up watching game shows on TV, and when cable came around, caught even more on the likes of the Game Show Network. I jumped at the chance to add that kind of fun to my growing DJ company's offerings.

That first set of hardware looked the part (Game Show Mania's GSS3). The buzzers had a lockout system that would allow only one person a chance to answer (like on a real TV game show), turn on their microphone and give them points for getting it right or wrong. Since

then, game shows on TV have seen a "Second Golden Age" with *Who Wants To Be A Millionaire*, and others capturing viewers since the early 2000s.

IT'S (MOBILE) SHOW TIME

The level of game show that DJs can produce using hardware marketed to them on the pages of Mobile Beat has also seen a steady rise over the last ten years.

DigiGames (www.digigames.com) came into the market just over 10 years ago and is now one of the leaders in the industry, with everything from TV broadcast-ready systems to smaller buzzer systems great for schools or corporate parties.

Many game formats are available, some mimicking popular game shows from the past, but also new formats like Extreme Bingo that are a blast to run and to play. Plus, by providing archives of questions available for download to subscribers they have really become a one stop shop for most experiences that DJs want to produce for events.

Game Show Mania (www.gameshowmania.com) has gone through a resurgence in the last couple of years, with new hardware for DJs, including their famous Faceoff-style units and improvements to some of their classic technology.

IN DA CLUB

While DigiGames and Game Show Mania hardware and software are also being used for bar trivia-type weekday events, several other players have come into the industry promoting systems

targeted directly to this marketplace.

DJ Trivia's (www.djtrivia.com) popularity has really amped up over the last seven years, since their debut to the national DJ industry in 2010. They offer a territory-protected system where they provide the software and the nightly batch of trivia questions at a cost of under \$15-\$20/game with a one-time territory licensing fee. The questions (and sometimes jokes embedded in them) are fantastic, and it's a great service to consider if your goal is to have two or three weekday gigs for your company. The going rate for the bars is from \$125 to \$200 per week.

One of the newer game show formats to hit the USA is Speedquizzing (www.speedquizzingusa.com). Already popular in the UK, there are several dozen companies providing such services to local bars and pubs in the US. After meeting up with Speedquizzing USA's people recently at an East Coast event, I received a demo of the system and am currently playing with it to see the best way to offer this service to corporate and school clients.

Other systems that have gained exposure to the DJ world through Mobile Beat Magazine and Mobile Beat Las Vegas events (MBLV) include TriviaPunch (www.triviapunch.com), Team Text Trivia (www.teamtexttrivia.com) and Singo (www.playsingo.com). Each one has a unique angle on presenting game-based fun to your audiences.

Because game show and trivia events use a lot of the same hardware we already use as DJs, and because of its requirement of DJ talents like speaking/MCing events, these are perfect add-ons to the services that you provide with your DJ company. Look into them all and see which one might work best to help you add a new profit center to your DJ company's services! **MB**



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The Non-Secret Formula that Makes a Great Salesperson

By Jeffrey Gitomer

- *Why are salespeople great?*
- *What makes salespeople successful?*
- *What characteristics make up a sales superstar?*
- *Wouldn't you like to know the answer to these questions?*
- *So would every salesperson.*
- *So would every sales leader.*
- *So would every person who hires a salesperson.*

By understanding what criteria sales managers and business owners look for in a salesperson, you may be able to determine how

those characteristics fit into your own personal success formula.

Everybody tells me they wanna hire a great salesperson. They go through the expensive gyrations of outsourcing, insourcing, testing, interviewing and finally hiring. Then they train with some intensive orientation and a week or two of product sales skills, investing all the while in their hopeful rookie. Yet the turnover rate of salespeople is pegged at 74% in the first year. So evidently, there's a gap between who you think is great, and who is actually great.

I've been collecting great salesperson characteristics from many different sales managers and entrepreneurs. They'll all give me "hiring" criteria and characteris-

tics. But what they really mean is, "I need this person to have these skills in order to succeed in my company."

QUESTION: Do you hire for skills, and fire for attitude? Why don't you hire for attitude and train the skill? I have encountered hundreds of salespeople who claim to be great. Many of them are cynical and broke. The ones who really are great, don't have to brag about it. They carry their own water, chop their own wood, mind their own business, and don't have to talk about how great they are, because they have a positive attitude, a positive customer base, a positive success record, and a positive bank account to prove it. Their results do the talking.

It's funny that every person who has ever bragged to me about what a great salesman or saleswoman they are, has never bragged to me about what a great person they are. And if I'm doing the hiring, I'm going to start with a great person, not a great salesperson.

The lesson here is that attitude and work ethic are more important than sales skill. If they have a great attitude, and a

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The banner features a photograph of Jeffrey Gitomer, a bald man with a goatee, wearing a red button-down shirt and dark trousers. He is smiling and has his fists clenched in a celebratory gesture. The background is a vibrant, colorful scene of a large crowd at a night event, with confetti falling and bright lights. The text is overlaid on the image in various fonts and colors, including white, yellow, and black.

solid work ethic, they will accept learning new skills as a way of life and a path to success. If a person's attitude is lacking, they fall into the category of "you can't teach an old (sales)dog new tricks."

And then there's the character of the person. If you have a great salesperson with a rotten character, what do you do? You fire them, that's what you do.

Here's an easy unscientific answer to uncover the skill set, criteria, and characteristics of a great salesperson. Go back, and list the best ten salespeople you have ever known. Don't forget to include yourself. Leave some space to list their characteristics. Maybe make a spreadsheet listing their names across the top of the page. Then compile your list of great characteristics down the side, and begin checking boxes for each salesperson.

When you begin to chart the characteristics of great salespeople you have known or hired, you'll find that several of their characteristics are the same. Especially those of deep belief, ability to build relationships, ability to self-start, and ability to maintain a positive attitude.

You'll also discover that every sales superstar you've ever known had individual characteristics or strengths that made him or her rise above the others. Maybe it was the fact she was a single mom. Maybe it was the fact he had overcome some tragedy. Or maybe it was just personal determination. Maybe it was their athleticism and their willingness to be coached that created the discipline for them to succeed.

It's important that you list every one of these elements so that you're able to develop a full set of criteria. This will allow you to measure that criteria against yourself, and your coworkers. It will also aid you in the selection process as you seek another sales star.

Here's an idea: Why not list all the criteria and create a self-evaluation test?



Jeffrey Gitomer is the author of twelve best-selling books including *The Sales Bible*, *The Little Red Book of Selling*, and *The Little Gold Book of Yes! Attitude*. His real-world ideas and content are also available as online courses at www.GitomerLearningAcademy.com. For information about training and seminars visit www.Gitomer.com or www.GitomerCertifiedAdvisors.com, or email Jeffrey personally at salesman@gitomer.com.

Ask people (yourself included) to rate themselves in each of the sales characteristics. This will give them, and you, insight as to strengths and weaknesses, so that they (you) will know where to grow.

I've developed 13.5 characteristics compiled from salespeople and sales managers over the years. They will appear right here, NEXT MONTH. **MB**

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Increasing Complexity: Help or Hindrance?

By Stu Chisholm

When I began my DJ career in 1979, things were much harder. In the realm of media, vinyl records were heavy and bulky, and both records and cassette tapes presented many technical problems. Those included: how one could cue a particular song on a tape; keeping dust and dirt off of the grooves of a record; mechanical shocks from bouncy dance floors that could cause the record to skip; cue burn (the damage to vinyl caused by back-cueing); and so on.

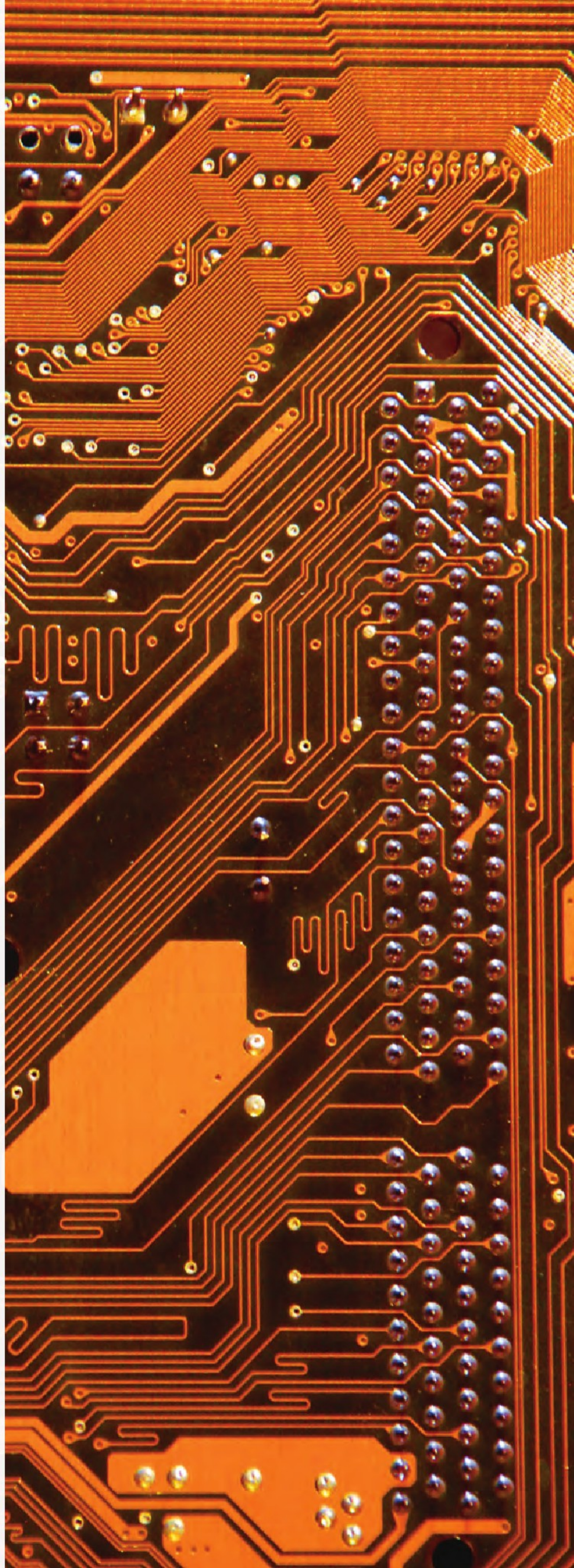
Even when CDs became the norm, eliminating most of those issues, they had a few of their own. Early CD players didn't have pitch controls, and they, too, could skip if mechanically jostled. Error correction was abysmal, so a dust particle could ruin your day. Yet that 4-foot-high hand cart with 350 lbs of vinyl records became a more svelte 1.5-foot, 200 lbs of CD cases with tenfold the amount of music. Many DJs carried their library around in binders, making their music stash look like a true "library."

"THE MORE THINGS CHANGE, THE MORE THEY STAY THE SAME" – Tower of Power

Today, I bring more than twice that amount of music, all as MP3 files, and all on a small hard drive that fits in my shirt pocket. The bulk and weight are a thing of the past, which my aging back appreciates! SanDisk recently revealed a 1 TB SD card, which means that a library the size of my current one will fit on media the size of a postage stamp. All good, right?

Well... not so fast. You see, other things were easier than they are now, because we've introduced a lot of figurative "middlemen"—things that get between the music and our audience. For instance, you had to rip that huge CD library to a digital file format. For a large library, that can take tremendous time! When I first did this, I had five computers running more than eight hours a day and it took about several weeks.

Happily, most of us now download our music already converted. No trips to a store, no ripping, no muss no fuss... except that most popular software programs, such as Virtual DJ and Serato, require the files to be properly tagged (ID3) and analyzed in order for them to appear in your searches. So, unlike that 45 RPM record that I could buy on the way to a gig and drop immediately on my audience, I must go through some fuss n' bother in order to actually play that hot song I just downloaded.



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The result is that we spend more time preparing for our gigs than we once did. Sometimes we do this on the fly, which can result in glitches during our performance, like that song we KNOW we have that isn't showing up in our searches when we need it! And we don't have time to root around the files in our hard drive to find it and run an analysis. So what we intended is not what we got. We also spend hours building a virtual crate for our performances.

Then there are the computers themselves. We love our computers...until they screw up. Windows throws us a blue

Whenever you add complexity, you add more points of potential failure along with the greater capability.

screen, our Mac balks, requesting a "keychain" code we can't remember because it's been months or maybe years since we set it up. My turntables from 1985 still run perfectly. My computer from 1995 is long gone, and wouldn't be suitable for DJ work even if it wasn't.

MORE TO GO WRONG

Whenever you add complexity, you add more points of potential failure along with the greater capability, so while we can do a whole lot more with our music and performances, we set ourselves up for potential disaster. Back in the '80s, I worked at a popular nightclub that featured bands, and I would DJ for the 20 minutes between sets. One night, a two-man band was performing. At the heart of their rig was a very conspicuous iMac. Halfway through their first song, the computer crashed. They had been slated to close the night, but never did get it working again, so I ended up being the grand finale!

Suffice it to say that change happens. We can't go back to the old days, nor would we want to. But a lot of the so-called "improvements" have turned into hassles, obstacles and potential problems. This brings me to the take-away for my rather long-winded history lesson: if you don't carry 100% back-up, then you may be in for a bad night. Not only do you need two computers, but two copies of your music library, two controllers, two sets of speakers, two...of everything. And even more than two when it comes to cables, fuses, interconnect cords, mics and other potential points of failure. At least today most of these things are smaller, lighter and even cheaper, so there's no need to skimp. Have on-site back-up equal to your main rig, and even circulate the components between the two to even out the wear-and-tear and make sure the back-up is working properly at all times. This way you know you have reliable alternatives when things go wrong—as they inevitably will.

Until next time, safe spinnin'! **MB**



*Stu Chisholm had been collecting music since he was about age 8 and began his DJ career in 1979. After a stint at the Specs Howard School of Broadcast Arts, he studied the DJ arts with famous Michigan broadcaster Bill Henning, interned at Detroit's rock powerhouse, WRIF, and later added voiceover work and club gigs at Detroit's best venues. He has shared his extensive DJ experience through MB columns, as a seminar speaker and through his book, *The Complete Disc Jockey: A Comprehensive Manual for the Professional DJ*.*

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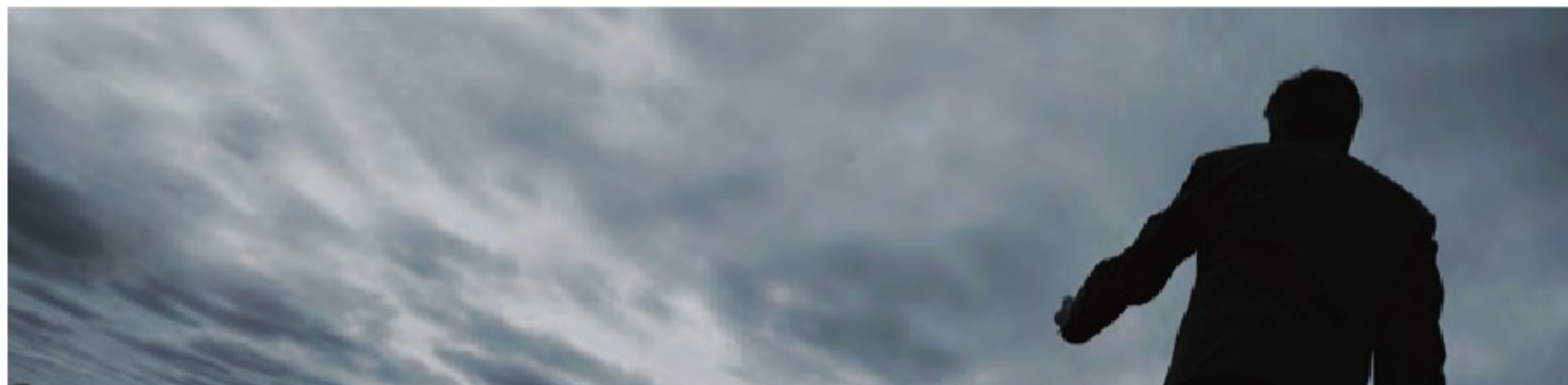
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Is Competition Always Good?

AN IN-DEPTH LOOK AT THE CURRENT STATE OF THE WEDDING MARKET

By Matt Martindale



- More innovation
- Greater efficiency and productivity
- Economic development and growth
- Greater wealth equality
- A greater wellbeing for individual initiative and liberty

First, let me say that I'm an economics nerd. I have a degree in Business (Marketing), with a minor in Economics (basically, a fancy word for the "scientific study of decision making"). My wife, Tami, has her degree in Consumer Science (basically, buyer behavior). I L-O-V-E economics! I am continually reading and studying lots of different topics in economic theory.

That being said, one particular topic has been of interest lately, especially with many venues "forcing" brides to use their in house DJ, or limiting her choice to one of three mediocre approved DJ companies. I've been immersed in a three-month study on the economic theory of *competition*, and it's been awesome.

I've read numerous articles, journals, legal opinions, court cases, books, etc., and also conducted interviews over the past three months, exploring the pros and cons of open competition. After studying both sides thoroughly, I genuinely feel that competition is good in every industry. YES—even the DJ industry.

Think about a very competitive industry, say, cell phones. Cell phone companies have responded differently to the market: Samsung, Blackberry, Android, Apple, etc. There are various makes and models of phones, and different carriers like Sprint, AT&T, Verizon, T-Mobile, Cricket (are they even still around?), etc. Each has differences in quality, phone size, specific functions and features, coverage service areas, data plans, etc. and are all priced differently, with different billing and payment options too. Why? Simple. Consumers have different needs, different wants, and different desires. We all carefully weigh our own basket of considerations that are important to us when making a purchase decision, even for something as simple as a cell phone. These distinctions are what lead to an actual NEED for choice, and the market responds with product differences, prices, etc.—with each company then striving to meet a targeted niche. All of us as consumers benefit from competition in cell phones. It is the same with automobiles, TVs, appliances, computers, hotels and airlines too.

Consumers WANT (and NEED) choice in the marketplace!

According to the *Oxford Journal*, competition yields:

- Lower costs and prices for goods and services
- Better quality
- More choices and variety

For the DJ industry, just like the cell phone industry, automobile or even the hotel industry, when there is an open and level playing field in which to compete in, I believe competition favors the consumer. Competition is the backbone of the U.S. economy and is further embodied in antitrust laws. Bear with me here, but here's just a short history lesson...

The Sherman Anti-Trust Act of 1890 was designed to be a comprehensive charter of economic liberty aimed at preserving free and unfettered competition as the rule of trade. It rests on the premise that the unrestrained interaction of competitive forces will yield the best allocation of our economic resources, the lowest prices, the highest quality and the greatest material progress, while at the same time, providing an environment conducive to the preservation of our democratic political and social institutions. But even if all of that were open to question, the policy unequivocally laid a basis for competition. (*N Pac Ry Co v US* 356 US 1, 4 (1958))

The premise is to yield a marketplace environment where consumers can enjoy increased access to goods and services they feel will best meet their particular wants, needs and desires. (Bottom line, consumers will find what serves their own interest first—provided they have both the freedom to choose and the ability to access information. This is key!) It is because then, and only then, companies are driven by a VOLUNTARY AND MUTUALLY BENEFICIAL relationship with customers to serve them. In his book *Good Profit: How Creating Value for Others Built One of the Most Successful Companies*, Charles Koch describes Koch Industries' Market-Based Management (MBM) framework. The core objective of MBM is to generate good profit by understanding customers' unmet needs and finding a way to satisfy them faster and better than competitors. Left un-tethered, the marketplace will always determine the right thing to do. I agree.

The foundation of competition policy assumes that in a free market place, customers themselves can best judge their own interests. For example, a wedding couple wants to book a specific DJ who they feel will best meet their needs, wants and desires, at a price point they are willing to pay for the value of those services. Sounds pretty basic, right? But what if they are not allowed to choose? What if their only choice is to take the assigned DJ company within the venue-bundled (inclusive) wedding package, or have no DJ at all? What if they're actually "penalized" with an extra fee for choosing somebody else, or have to still pay the fee for the "bundled" DJ they don't want, then still pay the fee of the one they do want? Essentially they're

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Duluth, MN



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Craig Lawrence
Butler, PA

"In February 2010, I invested in DJ Trivia. As a single op, I was looking to become full time in the business & believed DJ Trivia was the solution. DJ Trivia was such a hit with restaurants and bars that my schedule quickly became full. I now run 40+ DJ Trivia shows per week! Thanks to DJ Trivia, I am now able to spend more weekends with my family."

Bill Shaflucas
Buffalo, NY

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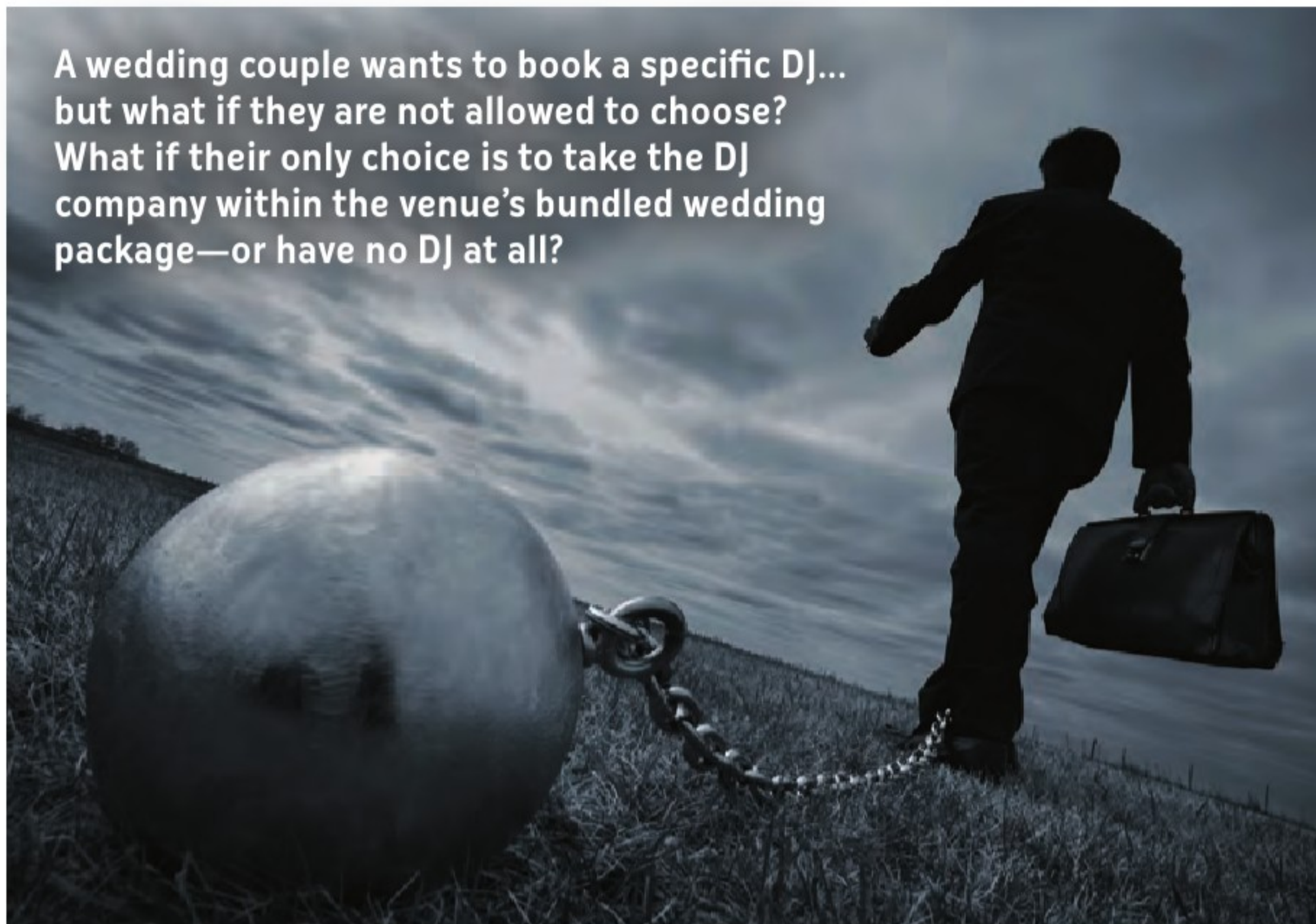
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A wedding couple wants to book a specific DJ... but what if they are not allowed to choose? What if their only choice is to take the DJ company within the venue's bundled wedding package—or have no DJ at all?



paying twice. Is that fair? Obviously not.

Nobel Prize-winning economist Milton Friedman summarized it best when he said: "There is one and only one social responsibility of business: to use its resources and engage in activities designed to increase its profits, so long as it stays within the rules of the game, which is to say, engages in open and free competition without deception or fraud."

FEELING THE PRESSURE TO COMPETE

Competition, however, has a dark side. Competition can pressure companies to engage in unethical, immoral or even criminal behavior if doing so yields a relative competitive advantage, even if it's in the short term. Studies show that as competition increases and profit margins decrease, companies have a greater incentive to engage in questionable or even outright illegal behavior. In my research, I've concluded that this is generally evident in five distinct areas:

1. 1) When the market for a good or service is over-saturated.
2. 2) Anchoring is the norm and there is complacency in methods, marketing, performance or innovation. (Again, sound familiar?) I personally believe that open and free competition is the best way to actually test your marketing strategies, pricing, innovation, creativity, and quality.
3. 3) There are bidding wars for the same customer leaving price (not value) as the deciding factor.



Matt Martindale has been a professional DJ and MC since 1989, performing at more than 1,400 wedding receptions since then. Along with running his award-winning, multi-DJ company, Amoré DJ Entertainment (www.amoredjentertainment.com), he has accumulated extensive entertainment experience including training in audio production, sound engineering, lighting and design, improv comedy, voice over artistry, magic, and much more.

4.4) There is collusion among two (or more) competitors by way of an agreement (written or not), or a mutual understanding in order to gain something for a specific means. Say what? Okay, for example, there are three DJ companies to choose from in the bundled inclusive wedding package. They agree to set a fixed price and the same options because they are the only three possible choices a bride may choose from. These prices can be set very low, to deter outside competition, if outside competition is even allowed. (I've also found that these firms often mutually agree to do very basic services then use these events as a "training ground" for new and unproven DJs); or arbitrarily high (if outside competition is not allowed) since one of the three DJ companies will have to be

booked. (We'll cover this a lot more in Part 2 of this article next month with several actual case studies. So, far, do these factors all sound familiar?

5. When there are low barriers to enter the market—meaning it's easy to compete (very little experience needed) and doesn't cost very much to get started (just a couple of speakers, and an iPod). (Sound familiar?) (A surge in competitors in an industry where there are low barriers to enter a marketplace can be a valid predictor of a marketplace bubble. It's also a clear sign that the industry, as a whole, is doing a very poor job of educating the consumer on the actual value of the services received. The industry has more than likely allowed itself to be defined by others, for example, the "DJ only plays music and makes an occasional announcement." At that point, price becomes the deciding factor.)

In order to gain a competitive advantage under any of these scenarios, companies try things like:

- Paying bribes (defined as "anything given or serving to induce." This is often disguised with words like "kickbacks, commission or referral fees" (either disclosed to the customer, or often undisclosed) to secure business for exclusive (or preferred) business relationships. (Again, we'll cover these in more detail in Part 2 of this article in the next issue.)
- The intentional under-reporting of profits or employees to avoid taxes.
- Investing less in legal compliance, training or professional development.
- The gross manipulation of event protocols with specific tactics like "tie in" agreements.

Wait, what? What's a "tie in" agreement? It's an agreement in which the seller (in this case, the all-inclusive wedding package provider), generally under the guise of promoting "convenience," conditions the sale of one product or service (the "tying" product)

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on the buyer's agreement to purchase a separate product (the "tied" product) from the seller. For example, a bride has to book a specific DJ service through the venue's bundled package service for her wedding if she wants the photo booth and flowers in her package too.

Alternatively, in legal terms, it is also considered a tying arrangement when the seller conditions the sale of the tying product on the buyer's agreement not to purchase the tied product from any other seller. For example, she has to book the specific flowers and cake within in package, but also has to agree not to choose any other outside photographers who aren't listed on the package if she is selecting a DJ from outside the bundled package.

I've found that brides sometimes face cancellation charges for not using a specific service, breach of contract fees, or additional fees to still pay who they don't want for their wedding. Sometimes venues hassle the DJ the bride does want with additional requirements and an intense 90-day vetting process, only to change the requirements weeks before the wedding, leaving her no choice but to go back to the bundled or in house DJ.

I know it's complicated but watch out!

Unfortunately, given the relative cost disadvantage, once one DJ company starts down this road, all the other local companies then face the competitive pressure to follow suit by incorporating the same type of unethical, immoral or illegal tactics above (ie. bribes, kickbacks, commission or referral fees, etc.) to compete. This leaves those companies, the customer, and society much worse off.

Don't believe me? In my three months of extensive research,

I also read *The Wal-Mart Effect: How the World's Most Powerful Company Really Works—and How It's Transforming the American Economy* by Charles Fishman. Fishman presents the case against Wal-Mart through multiple interviews with former Wal-Mart insiders and current suppliers to help readers fully understand Wal-Mart's penny-pinching mindset; the very same mindset has driven numerous suppliers into bankruptcy.

In Fishman's view, the "Wal-Mart effect" is a double-edged sword because yes, consumers benefit from lower prices, even if they don't shop at Wal-Mart, but Wal-Mart also has the power of life and death over its suppliers. It's a literal "race to the bottom" as suppliers are ultimately forced to choose between violating legal, moral and ethical standards, cutting corners, slashing quality, diminishing safety standards, even breaking the law, or lose market share, profits (sort of) and a steady a flow of customers. (Do you remember the lead paint found on toys from China sold by Wal-Mart in an effort to lower its prices? That happened because price was dictated to them. There are so many documented cases in this book, it's astounding.)

Think of it this way: A wedding venue features an inclusive wedding bundle package where a bride is heavily incentivized to select a specific DJ in the bundled all-inclusive package. Unknown to the bride, according to my research, about every eight months the venue then has that same DJ compete against other "B list" DJ companies for the single or shared exclusive slot. This process either 1) usually requires the selected DJ company to offer a cheaper price (a bigger discount to the venue, while they bill the full or even above market price and keep the spread; or 2) bid up the agreed upon "kickback, commission or referral fee" paid back from say, 21 percent to 23 percent. Then, the cycle starts all over in another eight months. Now the DJ company owner has three options: Lower his price more because what they are willing to pay is being dictated to; increase the kickback, etc. to, say, 24 percent, until they choose not participate; or go out of business. Either way, in the long run, it's a race to the bottom.

Ultimately, in my research, there's often a turning point where many venues then choose to have an exclusive, in-house DJ because they feel they can further maximize their profits by not even paying a DJ. They have defined the DJ's role as "only playing music and making an occasional announcement." In the end, this is more than likely true since many exclusive DJ companies admittedly use these type of relationships as a "training ground" for new DJs, or are completely burnt out and don't really care. Venues figure that the maintenance man or bartender can do just as good of a job.

It turns out to be a race to the bottom, yet DJs don't see it—yet.

All this to say that I believe that competition in the marketplace is good. I believe it benefits consumers when they can enjoy open access to the goods and services they feel will best meet their particular needs and desires. At that point, where companies are driven by a mutually beneficial relationship with customers, it truly becomes a win-win situation.

So while there's no right or wrong way to handle competitors (though I have my theories and will disclose some actual case studies in Part 2 that will be very eye-opening), looking at both sides now, the one thing for sure is that you're always going to have competition!

So, what do you think? Is competition good or bad? **MB**

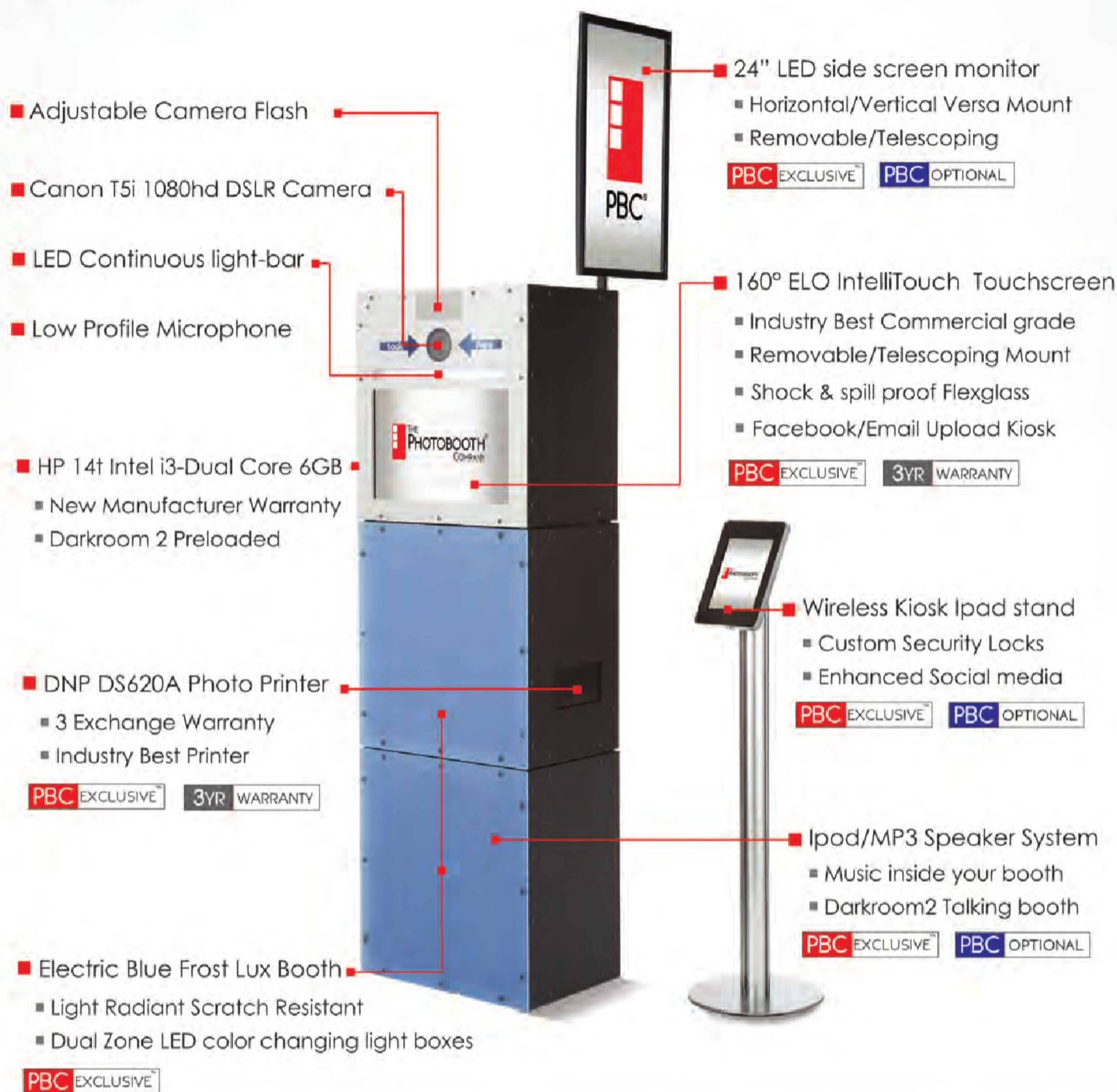
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PERFORMING WITH AND SELLING THE LATEST DJ GEAR GIVES TOM CAPO OF KPODJ A UNIQUE PERSPECTIVE ON TECHNOLOGY

By Mike “Dr. Frankenstand” Ryan

Using top-of-the-line sound equipment won't automatically make you a great DJ...but it sure would be fun. Tom Capo of KPODJ literally gets his pick of the best pro audio products our industry has to offer. But don't be jealous; it wasn't just handed to him on a silver record platter. He's been working hard building his Mobile DJ and retail businesses since he was 14-year-old. Capo shares his unique insight into our industry.

Mike Ryan: You started your Mobile DJ business as a teenager. That's not that unusual these days but before you were an adult you actually had a thriving retail business! So how and why did you go from Mobile DJing to selling DJ products?

Tom Capo: Since I was constantly buying new gear for myself, I was always selling my old gear. I sold most to other local DJs that I knew, but when they didn't need the gear I was selling, I started posting products online. Eventually, I traded someone two Numark turntables for the original KPODJ logo artwork and basic framework of a very simple e-commerce website. It grew slowly from there.

While still in high school, this young upstart had a couple advantages to help launch his Pro Audio business...

T C: I worked out of my parent's garage, my overhead was almost nothing and my few expenses included my cell phone and web hosting. Also being in the trenches (as a DJ) myself I had the advantage of hearing firsthand the unedited opinions and experiences of hundreds of other DJs. [Plus] I always liked to try new gear. My DJ setup was constantly changing and I especially liked trying lesser known brands that I thought were better than the popular stuff.

M R: I know a few former DJs who have branched off into other side jobs like operating a party donut business, running photo booths and even wedding officiating. Are we getting bored with DJing or is that just our nature of our personality?

T C: That's a good question. I'm not sure. Personally, I wouldn't say I was bored with DJing when my e-commerce business took over; I just went with what was working best. I think most DJs out there love music just as much as they love business. And if you're in business, you need to adapt and do what works.

M R: Now that you are successful in retail do you still DJ and why?

T C: Although our DJ services end of the business is much smaller than it used to be, we are still booking gigs regularly. I personally only do a couple per year, though. My favorite events to DJ are young weddings. Everyone comes to have fun and everyone has a lot of energy. They are usually enjoyable to DJ. Plus, using the gear helps dramatically on the retail side of the business.

M R: You have a college degree in engineering; is that your backup plan? Are you interested in designing new DJ products?

T C: I went to school for mechanical engineering. I almost dropped out halfway thru to focus on KPODJ, but my parents and I thought it would be a good idea to have a backup in case things didn't work out. Plus, college was fun and some classes were related to the DJ world. I made a subwoofer in my acoustics class that rattled the whole building. I'd love to help design new DJ products today, but I know that side of the industry can be very tricky.

M R: Other DJs may be envious of your transition from DJing into retail – do you agree with the statement that 'if you have to ask how to start a business then you probably won't be successful'? The idea is that you have to be a self starter.

T C: I disagree. I think there are many different ways people



become successful in business. Many, including myself, accredit the bulk of it to luck and timing. But I've seen *Shark Tank* and when they get involved, they seem to do a great job teaching entrepreneurs how to be successful."

M R: As someone who sells DJ products, without naming specific manufacturers or gear, what is your opinion of quality of current pro audio products and the companies behind them? We have heard certain companies have been "racing to the bottom" quality-wise, so to speak.

T C: I'm not sure if this is a "DJ-only" trait or a trait that all shoppers have, but many of our customers swear off an entire brand after just one or two bad experiences. I don't believe any of the manufacturers that compete in the "race to the bottom" will succeed, especially in the professional entertainment business [where] reliability is extremely important. And DJs talk, so word spreads fast.

M R: With access to the best DJ products out there what is your system and or describe your dream system setup?

T C: For a wedding with simple dance floor lighting, I'd bring:

Audio Main Components:

- (2) FBT Mitus 114A
- (1) FBT Q118SA
- (1) Pioneer DDJ-SX

Lighting/Trussing:

- (2) 6.5' Global Truss Totems
- (1) Global DJ Truss Booth (We basically take two 6.5'

totems and connect them with another piece of trussing at table height and add boom arms for the controller to sit on)

- (2) Blizzard Lighting G-Max
- (2) Blizzard Lighting Snake Eyes
- (1) X-Laser Hawk 500
- (1) Antari HZ350
- Uplighting as necessary. We have the Blizzard Fab 5 Skywires (their old battery pars) for traditional uplights and ApeLabs ApeLight and LightCans for wall art.

Accessories:

- (1) JTS IN264 Wireless Mic
- (1) JTS NX-7 Wired Mic
- (1) Samson Z55 Headphones
- (1) ProX DDJ-SX Case
- (2) Frankenstands + bag
- Cables, Cable Ties, Bags, Carts, Etc.

M R: Please share with us what you think DJs should be looking for when searching for new equipment, and what we should avoid.

T C: If you're going the software route, I'd recommend trying as many free trials as you can and choosing your favorite software first. Then choose your controller based on features and reviews regarding reliability. Once you get used to certain a DJ application, you probably won't want to switch to new one.

KPODJ (www.kpodj.com) is located in Hopatcong, NJ. **MB**

The poster for Mobile Beat Las Vegas 21 (MBLV21) features a vibrant background of a nightclub scene with red and blue lighting and a large crowd. In the top left corner is the MBLV21 logo, which includes a stylized '21' and the text 'MOBILE BEAT LAS VEGAS' and 'MBLV21'. Below the logo is the hashtag '#MBLV21'. In the center, the text 'DJ Industry Keynote: Paul Oakenfold + Performance and Meet and Greet' is displayed in a bold, white font. At the bottom left, the dates 'March 13-16, 2017' and the location '- Tropicana, Las Vegas' are listed. At the bottom center, the website 'MobileBeatLasVegas.com' is written in a large, bold, yellow font. On the right side of the poster is a portrait of Paul Oakenfold, a man with short brown hair, wearing a dark blue blazer over a light blue t-shirt.

Organizing Your Events

GOOD COORDINATION LEADS TO GREAT CELEBRATIONS

By Staci Nichols

Like it or not, the DJ often times is left responsible for organizing and coordinating events that we DJ.

Last month, one of my brides hired a corporate event planner to do the day-of coordination at her wedding. When the coordinator wasn't at the rehearsal and was using my DJ outline (instead of creating her own), I knew we shouldn't expect much from her during the wedding. Where was she as the wedding party needed to be cued to walk down the aisle? Who knows? After she failed to coordinate the pouring of the champagne after repeated reminders, the bride asked me to take over. And, by then, I was ready to do so as well (the toasts were almost an hour late).

WEDDING COORDINATION: MOSTLY BEFORE THE WEDDING

Your outline and the level of detail you put into it will make all the difference. After cruising a lot of DJ websites, it appears that a great many of us are showing up at our events with nothing more than one or two forms the client filled out with some song titles and are waiting to be babysat by a coordinator or bridesmaid for the rest. No, there isn't technically anything wrong with this—we are DJs, not coordinators. BUT...if you want those referrals, tips, five-star reviews, and happy clients, not needing to be babysat is a must. Start typing up custom outlines that include details beyond song titles and the order of events. Do they want the Mother-Son Dance song faded out early? Do they need you to dismiss tables for the buffet? When is the photographer leaving (so you can make sure the bouquet is tossed before then)?

DAY-OF STAGING

Notice I did not say "day-of coordination"? That's because what we as DJs need to do to ensure a smooth event is slightly different. The day-of coordinator will not be coaching all the toasters on how to hold the mic, reminding them to bring their drink up to the mic with them, and telling them to already be standing up front when the toaster in front of them starts speaking. This is what is meant by staging. During dinner, remind anyone who will be involved in one of the formalities of their role, the order of events, what to do, and where to do it. This avoids announcing



DJ Staci Nichols is based in San Diego. She specializes in spinning "country fusion," Latin/Spanish, and mainstream music. Her wedding know-how has appeared in San Diego Style Weddings, Offbeat Bride, Wedding Planner Magazine, Gig Masters, Brides Without Borders, Book More Brides, and more. SanDiegoDJStaci.com. Instagram/Facebook/Pinterest/Twitter: SanDiegoDJStaci



More Coordinating Tips

- ◆ Do you have a professional folder, clipboard, or briefcase for the day of the wedding?
- ◆ When there is no Day-Of Coordinator, send your flawless event outline to the other vendors before the wedding, introduce yourself, and ask them to look it over, ensuring their needs are met by the outline as well. (How often has the couple forgotten to tell you about their mid-dinner sunset photos—right?)
- ◆ Always keep 3" x 5" notecards with you for those nervous toasters who realize at the last minute that they would in fact like to make a few notes before they head up to the mic.
- ◆ Remember the coordinator has had to babysit most of the DJs they've worked with...so don't take it personally when the asst. coordinator spends all night glued to your hip. This is the person most likely to remember that you did not require babysitting and send you referrals!

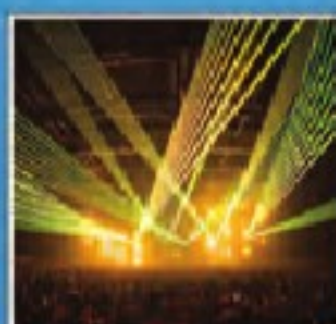
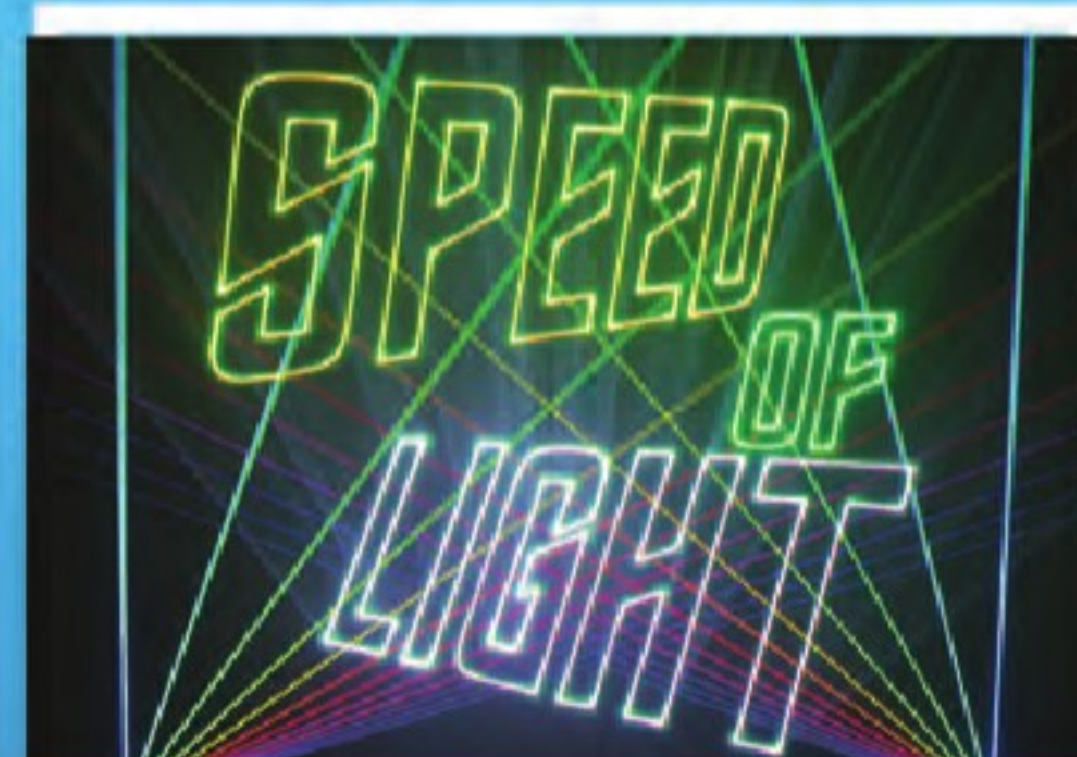
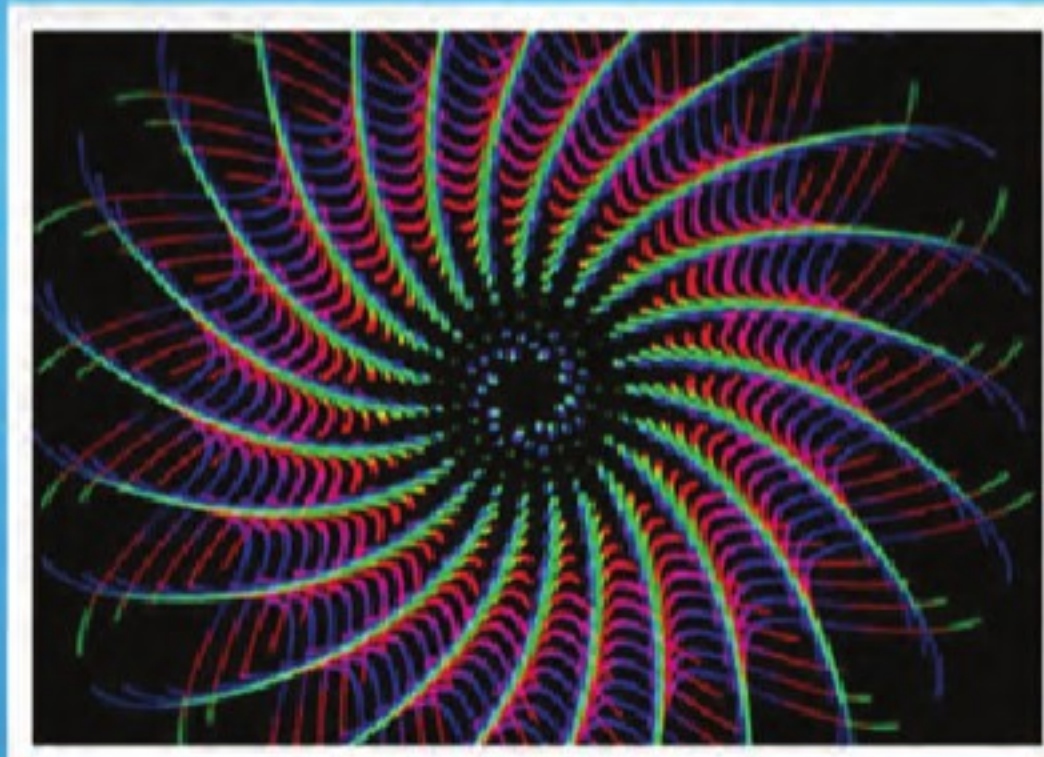
wasting a collective 10 minutes as everyone watches each toaster stand up from their table, push in his or her chair, walk across the room—snoooooooooooooze—guests are already bored before the person even gets to the mic and starts his or her toast.

MAKE SALES EASIER

Once you figure out your own recipe for putting together a rock-solid event outline, show prospective clients a recent outline so they can see your level of detail. It will be a unique selling tool that puts you way ahead of the competition. Not only that, but rest assured that venues, coordinators, and caterers will sit up and take notice that events with you always run smoothly, reducing their own level of work and stress. Hello referrals! **MB**

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Applying Array Technology to Portable Sound

By Robert Lindquist

Technology, as it relates to the art and profession of mobile DJs, reaches way beyond loudspeakers. I mention this from the get-go because the title of this feature may prompt you to think it's simply an infomercial for Bose. While Bose is indeed a company driven to innovate, the intent here is to cover a broad range of technologies for DJs—and if those products happen to be from Bose, so be it.

Case in point: I just finished reading about one of Bose Professional's latest products, the ShowMatch DeltaQ™ array loudspeakers. These are meant for applications such as small clubs, churches and amphitheatres with audience capacities in the range of 5,000 to 7,500 people. DeltaQ array technology obviously goes way beyond your mobile rig, but it does have some of the DNA found in the Bose line of portable PA systems.

The Bose L1 systems (www.bose.com/l1systems) were the point where Bose first brought line array technology to portable audio. Originally the L1 systems were designed for musicians but became an unexpected hit with DJs. As Bose gained more knowledge about the challenges mobile DJs deal with in their quest to keep their crowds hoppin', Bose saw an opportunity to take it a step further.

With audiences demanding rib-rattling bass and higher SPLs,

combined with the inconsistencies of digital audio—and venues with back pain-inducing load-in/load-out requirements—Bose engineers went to work designing a speaker that marries their deep experience with line arrays to meet the specific needs of portable sound users. The result is the F1 Model 812 Flexible Array loudspeaker.

While I have not personally used an F1 for either a DJ performance or for mixing a live band (and therefore will not comment on their performance) I do understand the concept. Inside each top box are eight 2.25" drivers mounted in vertical alignment in front of a 12-inch low frequency driver. To better direct the sound toward the ears of the audience, the front baffle adjusts to provide four vertical coverage patterns. So, for example, if the audience is lower than the speakers on stage, you can focus the sound down. If the audience is on the same plane as the speakers, you can beam it straight out, and so on. Once you have the position that hits the sweet spot, the system automatically sets the EQ for that specific coverage pattern. With the F1 and multiple driver approach, Bose has made it possible for DJs to overcome one of the more common situations that result in compromised sound.

To reinforce the lows, the F1 Sub packages a duet of high-excursion 10-inch drivers in a cab that also acts as a stand for the top box. You can learn more about the F1 Model 812 at the Bose web site (www.bose.com/prc.jsp?url=/promotions/entry_pages/f1/index_en.jsp). **MB**



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Bose® F1 Model 812
Flexible Array Loudspeaker

F1 Model 812 Loudspeaker

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- Flexible vertical control with 100° horizontal coverage
- Unique flexible array provides four coverage patterns
- One 12" woofer and eight 2.25" drivers

1 speaker. 4 coverage patterns.



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F1 Subwoofer

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- Integrated mounting stand for F1 Model 812 loudspeaker



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More information:
Bose.com/F1

Get Ready to Grow

EXPAND YOUR COMPANY WITH THE RIGHT ATTITUDES AND PEOPLE

By Jason Weldon

I was driving to work the other day and while pulling into the local Wawa convenience store, I was pondering the growth of companies; why one company might grow over another. This was particularly on my mind because my company seems to be in another growth phase. Actually, it seems like we are consistently in one these growth phases every other year. Certainly not a bad thing.

During that day, I took some time to talk to some of the other larger companies in the area, as well as just thinking about the companies that haven't grown over the years that I have been in business. I did not talk to the non-growing companies, only speculating from the few conversations I have had with them over the many years.

The companies that were growing did one thing differently than the companies that seemed to be in the same place they were five years ago. They hired people that knew more than they the

owner(s) or management team did.

They both had passion. They both had organization. They both wanted to grow. But the company that actually was growing was the company that understood what they didn't know and then went out and hired the person or people who could help them.

You can't do it all. And if you try to do it all, you are going to be left in the dust by the companies that are continuing to bring in good people that push the company, as a whole, to new levels. In the DJ business, we are constantly hindered by "I can do it all" or the "No one can do it better than me" attitudes. And let's face it: No, you can't do it all, and yes, someone can do it better than you...and they will.

You only know as much as you know. And you only have so much time to learn the things you want to learn. Why are you going to focus your time on things that you think you may want to learn, but

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then you just sit, spinning your wheels getting nowhere?

For example, let's say that you want to get into lighting as an addition to your DJ offerings, but you don't know much about lighting at all. You could take the

No, you can't do it all, and yes, someone can do it better than you... and they will.

next few months (or years) learning it and all the things that come along with that sort of thing. Or you could hire someone who knows lighting. A person, who, from the jump, gets you in a position to buy the right gear the first time, gets you connections to help sell the service and then makes the event happen better than what was expected. All while freeing up your time to continue to run and grow the company in another direction.

You see, you can't know it all. And if you try to, you are just setting yourself up for being stagnant. You are best suited for what you are best suited for. And just like the other companies I was talking about earlier, the ones that found what they were not best suited for and then hired people that were the best, were the ones that saw great growth and consistent gains year after year. Stick to what you are naturally good at and let that be your objective every day. **MB**

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